April 4, 1967

Mr. Eliot Fremont-Smith
The New York Times
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Fremont-Smith:

That a truly impressive number of shoulders, each carrying just the right amount of water, you put on display in that remarkably restrained headline, "At Last, the Whole Book - And Worth Having", and in your comment on Manchester's book. Particularly impressive is your opinion that "it is a remarkably clear, detailed, penetrating and empathetic account of the assassination ..." The one word I had expected to find here, without which none of the others has meaning, is "accurate", particularly disconcerting because of your extraneous comment, "the bizarre investigation being conducted in New Orleans". Not unrelated is this sentence, "As a historical document, the value of 'The Death of a President' cannot seriously be challenged."

I think it is fair to ask of you the extent of the scholarship that warrants your expressing an opinion on what is fact about the assassination.

I also think it not inappropriate to recall our previous correspondence in which you have yet to address yourself to my comment on what reviewers can do to make a book a success or to ruin it by simply talking about things they know absolutely nothing about and exercising judgments for which they are utterly unqualified.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

P.S. In talking about God, how did you manage to miss Manchester?